

**REMARKS/ARGUMENTS**

The Office Action mailed February 8, 2006, has been received and reviewed. Claims 1 through 35, 40, and 42 through 49 are currently pending in the application. Claims 6 through 18, 22, 23, 25 through 35, and 47 through 49 have been withdrawn from consideration as being drawn to non-elected invention(s). Claims 1 through 5, 42, 43, and 45 stand rejected. Claim 40 is allowed. Claims 19 through 21, 24, and 44 through 46 have been objected to as being dependent upon rejected base claims, but the indication of allowable subject matter in such claims is noted with appreciation. Applicants have amended claims 1, 20, and 42, cancelled claims 2, 19, and 44, added new claims 50 and 51, and respectfully request reconsideration of the application as amended herein.

**Rejoinder of claims 25-35**

Applicants request rejoinder of claims 25-35. Claims 25-35 are non-elected claims following the Restriction Requirement of May 13, 2005. The Restriction Requirement was appropriate at the time, in light of the then-pending claims. However, independent claim 1, as amended herein, recites substantially similar subject matter to restricted independent claims 25 and 29. Amended independent claim 1 recites the limitation, "wherein the at least one axial thrust valve and the at least one maneuver control valve are operable in combination for simultaneous opening to reduce pressure within the pressure vessel to a degree sufficient to terminate combustion of the at least one solid propellant grain." Independent claim 25 recites a method for extinguishing a solid propellant, "opening the plurality of valves to reduce pressure within the pressure vessel to a degree sufficient to terminate combustion of the solid propellant." Independent claim 29 recites a propulsion system for propelling and maneuvering a vehicle, "wherein the at least one valve and the valves of the plurality are operable to open fully in combination to cause rapid depressurization of the interior of the pressure vessel to stop combustion of the at least one solid propellant charge."

Applicants respectfully submit that the inventions of independent claims 1, 25, and 29 are not independent and distinct as claimed. Applicants further submit that there is not a serious burden on the Examiner to search the inventions of claims 25-35. As such, applicants respectfully request that claims 25-35 be rejoined in the present application.

Consideration of claims 25-35 is respectfully requested.

**35 U.S.C. § 102(b) Anticipation Rejections**

Anticipation Rejection Based on U.S. Patent No. 5,765,367 to Denoel et al.

Claims 1 through 5, 42, 43, and 45 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Denoel et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,765,367). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection, as hereinafter set forth.

A claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference. *Verdegaal Brothers v. Union Oil Co. of California*, 2 USPQ2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987). The identical invention must be shown in as complete detail as is contained in the claim. *Richardson v. Suzuki Motor Co.*, 9 USPQ2d 1913, 1920 (Fed. Cir. 1989).

Claim 19 stands objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but is indicated to contain allowable subject matter and would be allowable if placed in appropriate independent form. Claim 1 has been amended to include all of the limitations of claim 2 and claim 19 depending therefrom. Consequently, it is believed that claim 1, as amended herein, is in condition for allowance.

Claim 2 has been cancelled.

Claims 3-5 are each allowable, among other reasons, as depending from claim 1, which should be allowed.

Claim 44 stands objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but is indicated to contain allowable subject matter and would be allowable if placed in appropriate independent form. Claim 42 has been amended to include all of the limitations of claim 44. Consequently, it is believed that claim 42, as amended herein, is in condition for allowance.

Claims 43 and 45 are each allowable, among other reasons, as depending from claim 42, which should be allowed.

**Allowable Subject Matter**

Claim 40 is allowed.

Claims 19 through 21, 24, 44, and 46 stand objected to as being dependent upon rejected base claims, but are indicated to contain allowable subject matter and would be allowable if placed in appropriate independent form.

Claim 1 has been amended to include all of the limitations of claims 2 and 19.

Consequently, it is believed that claim 1, as amended herein, is in condition for allowance.

Claim 20 has been amended to depend from claim 1, and is therefore in condition for allowance.

Claim 21 depends from claim 20, and is therefore in condition for allowance. New claim 50 has been written to include all of the limitations of claim 24 as well as the limitations of base claim 1 prior to the present amendments thereto, and is therefore in condition for allowance. Claim 42 has been amended to include all of the limitations of claim 44. Consequently, it is believed that claim 42, as amended herein, is in condition for allowance. New claim 51 has been written to include all of the limitations of claim 46 as well as the limitations of base claim 42 prior to the present amendments thereto, and is therefore in condition for allowance.

**ENTRY OF AMENDMENTS**

The amendments to claims 1, 20, and 42 above, and new claims 50 and 51 should be entered by the Examiner because the amendments are supported by the as-filed specification and drawings and do not add any new matter to the application.

**CONCLUSION**

Claims 1, 3-18, 20-24, 40, and 42-43 are believed to be in condition for allowance, and an early notice thereof is respectfully solicited. Should the Examiner determine that additional issues remain which might be resolved by a telephone conference, he is respectfully invited to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,



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